

CLAIMS

- 1 ① A method for generating recommendations for consumer preference items,
2 comprising:
 - 3 (a) generating information identifying a plurality of profile sample items based
4 on selections made by a customer;
 - 5 (b) applying the profile sample item information as an input to a
6 recommendation database, the database storing information identifying a
7 plurality of preference items and distances between pairs of items, the
8 distances being calculated from preference ratings obtained from a
9 consumer preference test; and
 - 10 (c) recommending to the customer consumer preference items that are
11 located in the database within a predetermined distance from the profile
12 sample items.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 step (a) comprises
 - 2 (a1) receiving a plurality of item category selections from the customer, each
3 item category representing an area of potential interest to the customer;
 - 4 (a2) displaying information identifying a plurality of sample preference items
5 representing subclasses in each category; and
 - 6 (a3) selecting sample preference items based on information received from the
7 customer.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein step (a3) comprises receiving a rating from the
2 customer for each displayed sample preference item and selecting sample
3 preference items based on the received rating.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the consumer preference test is conducted before
2 a live audience.

- 1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the consumer preference test is conducted
2 individually respondent by respondent with a plurality of respondents and each
3 respondent rates each of a plurality of preference items.
- 1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein a distance in the database is calculated between
2 a pair of preference items by calculating the difference in preference ratings
3 between the pair of preference items for each respondent and combining the
4 preference rating differences for all respondents.
- 1 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the distances are scaled to fall within a
2 predetermined range.
- 1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein step (c) comprises displaying the recommended
2 items to the customer.
- 1 9. The method of claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises generating information
2 identifying a plurality of profile sample items based on selections made by a
3 customer and on information identifying items recommended in step (c).
- 1 10. The method of claim 1 wherein step(a) further comprises generating information
2 identifying a plurality of profile sample items by displaying information identifying
3 items recommended in step (c) to a customer, receiving a rating from the
4 customer for each displayed item and using the received ratings to generate the
5 information identifying a plurality of profile sample items.
- 1 11. The method of claim 1 wherein the preference items are songs.
- 1 12. The method of claim 1 wherein the preference items are movies.

1 13. The method of claim 1 wherein the preference items are television shows.

1 14. The method of claim 1 wherein the preference items are books.

1 15. The method of claim 1 wherein the preference items are fashions.

1 16. Apparatus for generating recommendations for consumer preference items,
2 comprising:

3 a profile generator that generates information identifying a plurality of
4 profile sample items based on selections made by a customer;

5 a recommendation database that receives the profile sample items as
6 inputs, the database storing information identifying a plurality of preference items
7 and distances between pairs of items, the distances being calculated from
8 preference ratings obtained from a consumer preference test; and

9 a recommendation unit that recommends to the customer consumer
10 preference items that are located in the database within a predetermined
11 distance from the profile sample items.

1 17. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the profile generator comprises:

2 a category generator that receives a plurality of item category selections
3 from the customer, each item category representing an area of potential interest
4 to the customer;

5 a sample profile item generator that displays information identifying a
6 plurality of sample preference items representing subclasses in each category;
7 and

8 an item thresholding unit that selects sample preference items based on
9 information received from the customer.

1 18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the sample item profile generator comprises
2 an input mechanism for receiving a rating from the customer for each displayed

3 sample preference item and the item thresholding unit selects sample preference
4 items based on the received ratings.

1 19. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the consumer preference test is conducted
2 before a live audience.

1 20. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the consumer preference test is conducted
2 individually respondent by respondent with a plurality of respondents and each
3 respondent rates each of a plurality of preference items.

1 21. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein a distance in the database is calculated
2 between a pair of preference items by calculating the difference in preference
3 ratings between the pair of preference items for each respondent and combining
4 the preference rating differences for all respondents.

1 22. The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the distances are scaled to fall within a
2 predetermined range.

1 23. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the recommendation unit comprises a display
2 that displays the recommended items to the customer.

1 24. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the profile generator generates information
2 identifying a plurality of profile sample items based on selections made by a
3 customer and on information identifying recommended items calculated by the
4 recommendation unit.

1 25. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the profile generator comprises a display that
2 displays recommendations generated by the recommendation unit to a customer,
3 an input mechanism that receives a rating from the customer for each displayed

item and the item thresholding unit selects sample preference items using the received ratings.

26. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the preference items are songs.

27. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the preference items are movies.

28. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the preference items are television shows.

29. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the preference items are books.

30. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the preference items are fashions.

31. A computer program product for generating recommendations for consumer preference items, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code thereon:

program code for generating information identifying a plurality of profile sample items based on selections made by a customer;

program code for applying the profile sample item information as an input to a recommendation database, the database storing information identifying a plurality of preference items and distances between pairs of items, the distances being calculated from preference ratings obtained from a consumer preference test; and

program code for recommending to the customer consumer preference items that are located in the database within a predetermined distance from the profile sample items.

32. The computer program product of claim 31 further comprising program code for generating the recommendation database information.

1 33. The computer program product of claim 32 wherein the consumer preference test
2 is conducted with a plurality of respondents and each respondent rates each of a
3 plurality of preference items and wherein the program code for generating the
4 database information comprises program code for calculating a distance in the
5 database between a pair of preference items by calculating the difference in
6 preference ratings between the pair of preference items for each respondent and
7 combining the preference rating differences for all respondents.